

In the Claims:

1. (currently amended) A pigment comprising particles having a length of from 2 μm to 5 mm, a width of from 2 μm to 2 mm, and a thickness of from 20 nm to 2 μm , and a ratio of length to thickness of at least 2 : 1, wherein the particles contain a core of SiO_y with $0.70 \leq y \leq 1.95$ $1.1 \leq y \leq 1.8$, having two substantially parallel faces, the distance between which is the shortest axis of the core, and
 - (a) a dielectric material having a high index of refraction.
2. (currently amended) A pigment comprising particles having a length of from 2 μm to 5 mm, a width of from 2 μm to 2 mm, and a thickness of from 20 nm to 2 μm , and a ratio of length to thickness of at least 2 : 1, wherein the particles contain a core of SiO_y with $0.70 \leq y \leq 1.95$ $1.1 \leq y \leq 1.8$, having two substantially parallel faces, the distance between which is the shortest axis of the core, and
 - (a) a thin semi-transparent metal layer.
3. (original) The pigment according to claim 1, wherein the pigment comprises in addition (b) a metal oxide of low refractive index, wherein the difference of the refractive indices is at least 0,1.
4. (currently amended) The pigment according to claim 1, wherein the dielectric material having a high index of refraction is a metal oxide of high refractive index and is one or more compounds selected from the group consisting of TiO_2 , ZrO_2 , Fe_2O_3 , Fe_3O_4 , Cr_2O_3 , ZnO , an iron titanate, an iron oxide hydrate and a titanium suboxide or a mixed phase of these compounds.
5. (previously presented) The pigment according to claim 3, wherein the metal oxide of low index of refraction is one or more compounds selected from the group consisting of SiO_2 , Al_2O_3 , AlOOH and B_2O_3 , wherein alkali or earth alkali metal oxides can be contained as additional component.
6. (previously presented) The pigment according to claim 1 wherein the SiO_y core has a thickness of from 20 to 200 nm.
7. (previously presented) A process for producing the pigment according to claim 3 by alternately coating SiO_y flakes with a metal oxide with a high refractive index and a metal oxide with a low refractive index in a wet process by hydrolysis of the corresponding water-soluble metal compounds, by separating, drying and optionally calcinating the pigment thus obtained.

8. (original) A process for producing the pigment according to claim 2, wherein SiO_y flakes are suspended in an aqueous and/or organic solvent containing medium in the presence of a metal compound and the metal compound is deposited onto SiO_y flakes by addition of a reducing agent.

9. (currently amended) A pigment comprising particles having a length of from 2 μm to 5 mm, a width of from 2 μm to 2 mm, and a ratio of length to thickness of at least 2 : 1, wherein the particles contain a core with a thickness of from 20 to 200 nm of SiO_2 or a silicon/silicon oxide core obtained by heating SiO_y flakes with $0.70 \leq y \leq 1.80$ $1.1 \leq y \leq 1.8$, in an oxygen-free atmosphere at a temperature of at least 400°C, having two substantially parallel faces, the distance between which is the shortest axis of the core, and a material having a high index of refraction, or a thin semi-transparent metal layer and optionally further layers.

10. (canceled)

11. (previously presented) Paints, printing inks, textiles, coatings, plastics, cosmetics, glazes for ceramics and glass, which are pigmented with a pigment Pigment according to claim 1.

12 (currently amended) A pigment according to claim 1, wherein $1.1 \leq y \leq 1.8$ and the dielectric material having a high index of refraction is a metal oxide.

13. (cancelled)

14. (previously presented) A pigment according to claim 3, wherein the metal oxide of high refractive index is one or more compounds selected from the group consisting of TiO_2 , ZrO_2 , Fe_2O_3 , Fe_3O_4 , Cr_2O_3 , ZnO , an iron titanate, an iron oxide hydrate and a titanium suboxide, or a mixed phase of these compounds.

15. (previously presented) The pigment according to claim 1, wherein the SiO_y core has a thickness of from 50 to 150 nm.

16. (previously presented) The pigment according to claim 1, wherein the SiO_y core has a thickness of from 60 to 120 nm.

17. (previously presented) The pigment according to claim 2, wherein the SiO_y core has a thickness of from 20 to 200 nm.

18. (previously presented) The pigment according to claim 2, wherein the SiO_y core has a thickness of from 50 to 150 nm.

19. (previously presented) The pigment according to claim 2, wherein the SiO_y core has a thickness of from 60 to 120 nm.

20. (currently amended) A pigment according to claim 9, wherein the thickness of the particle core is from 50 to 150 nm, $1.1 \leq y \leq 1.8$, and the material having a high index of refraction is a metal oxide.

21. (currently amended) Paints, printing inks, textiles, coatings, plastics, cosmetics, glazes for ceramics and glass, which are pigmented with a pigment according to claim 2.